

REMARKS

Claims 2-4, 7-9, 12-14, 17-19, and 22-24 are pending. Claims 2-4, 7-9, 12-14, 17-19, and 22-24 have been amended. Claims 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 15, 16, 20, 21, 25, and 26 have been canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 2-4, 7-9, 12-14, 17-19, and 22-24 are independent.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejection is respectfully solicited in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks. Applicant requests that this amendment be entered because it merely cancels rejected claims and redrafts allowed claims in independent form.

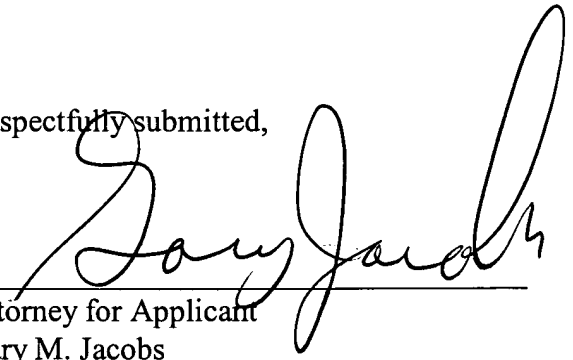
Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication that dependent Claims 2 through 4, 7 through 9, 12 through 14, 17 through 19, and 22 through 24 contain allowable subject matter and would be allowed if redrafted in independent form. In response, these claims have been so amended. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that these claims be allowed.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 15, 16, 20, 21, 25, and 26 are rejected again under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,483,939 B2 (Ochi et al.). In response, while not conceding the propriety of the rejection, these claims have been canceled without prejudice, thereby rendering the rejection moot.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the application is now in allowable form. Therefore, early passage to issue is respectfully solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C., office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address below.

Respectfully submitted,



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